



Universal PreKindergarten January 2023

Lowell Public Schools

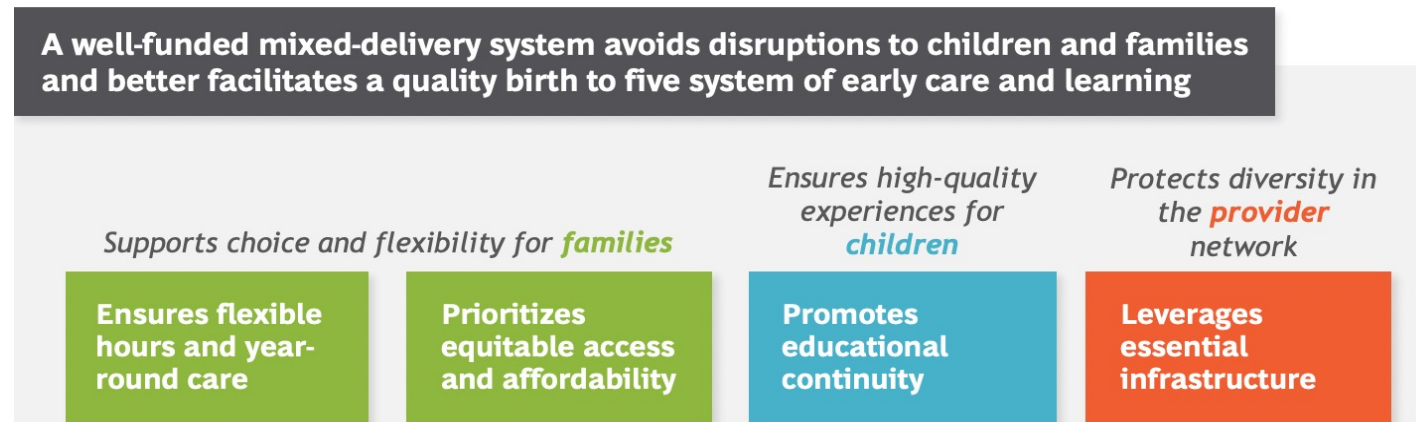
Goals of Presentation

- What is universal preK?
- Why is preK important?
- Lowell preK landscape
- 2022-23 preK expansion
 - Partnerships
 - CPPI
 - Shared Resources
 - Barriers
- Next steps and planning



What is Universal PreK?

- Universal preK is a policy framework in which all families with preschool-aged children have the opportunity to voluntarily enroll their child in a publicly-funded pre-kindergarten education program within the community.
- In Lowell, we are beginning to build a universal preschool model across a mixed delivery system. A mixed-delivery system combines services to provide full working day services for children and their working parents.
- Our goals is focused on serving ALL children 4 years olds by September 1.



<https://www.ececonsortium.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/ECEC-Solutions-Paper-Mixed-Delivery.pdf>

Why is preK important?

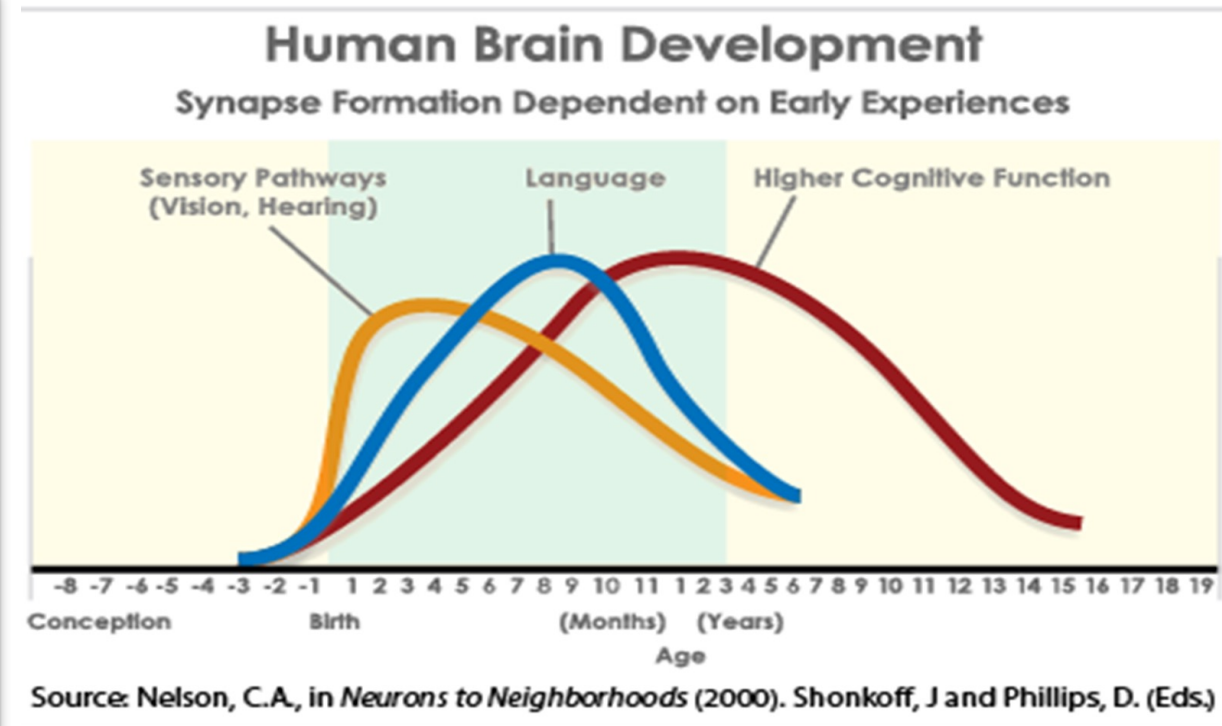
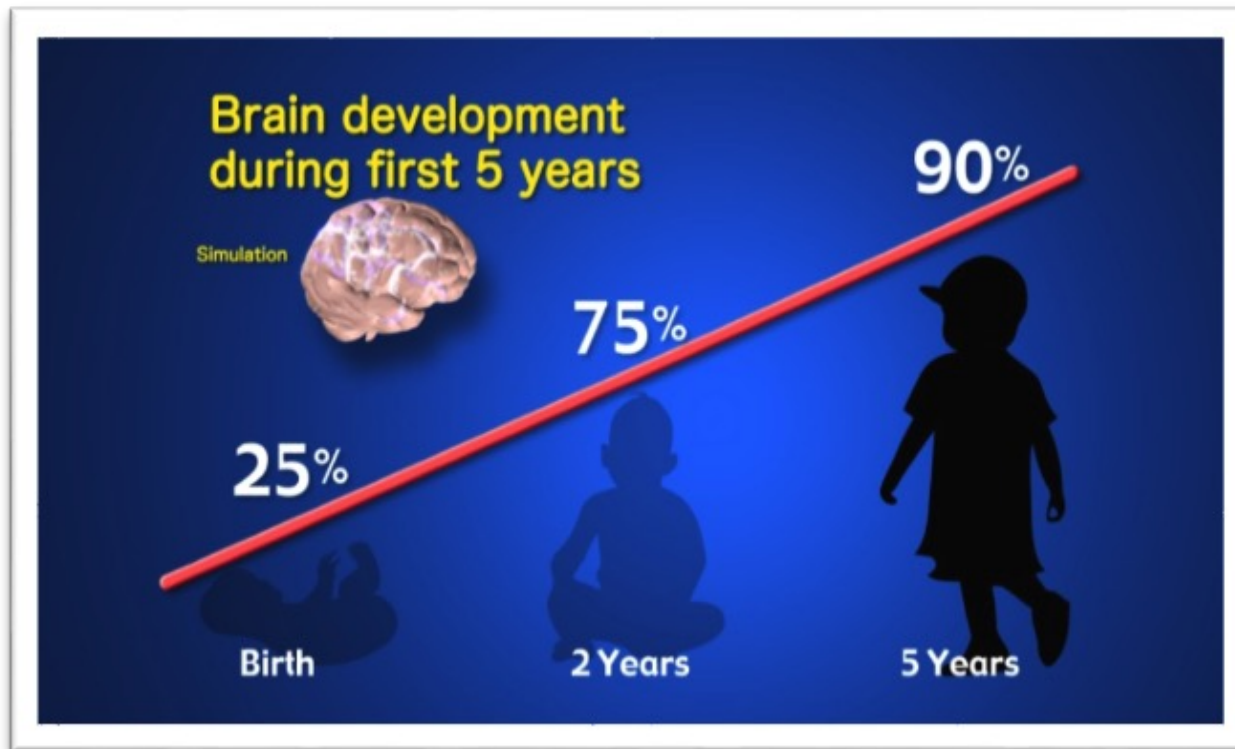
Three long-term studies have demonstrated evidence of the effects of preschool throughout adolescence and adulthood including:

- Better performance in reading and mathematics
- Fewer retentions in grade
- Fewer special education placements
- Higher rate of high school graduation
- More years of education
- Higher college attendance



Meloy, B., Gardner, M., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2019). Untangling the evidence on preschool effectiveness: Insights for policymakers. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

Brain Development is optimal in Early Childhood and the Preschool



Landscape of Center-Based Programs in Lowell as of 2022 serving preschoolers

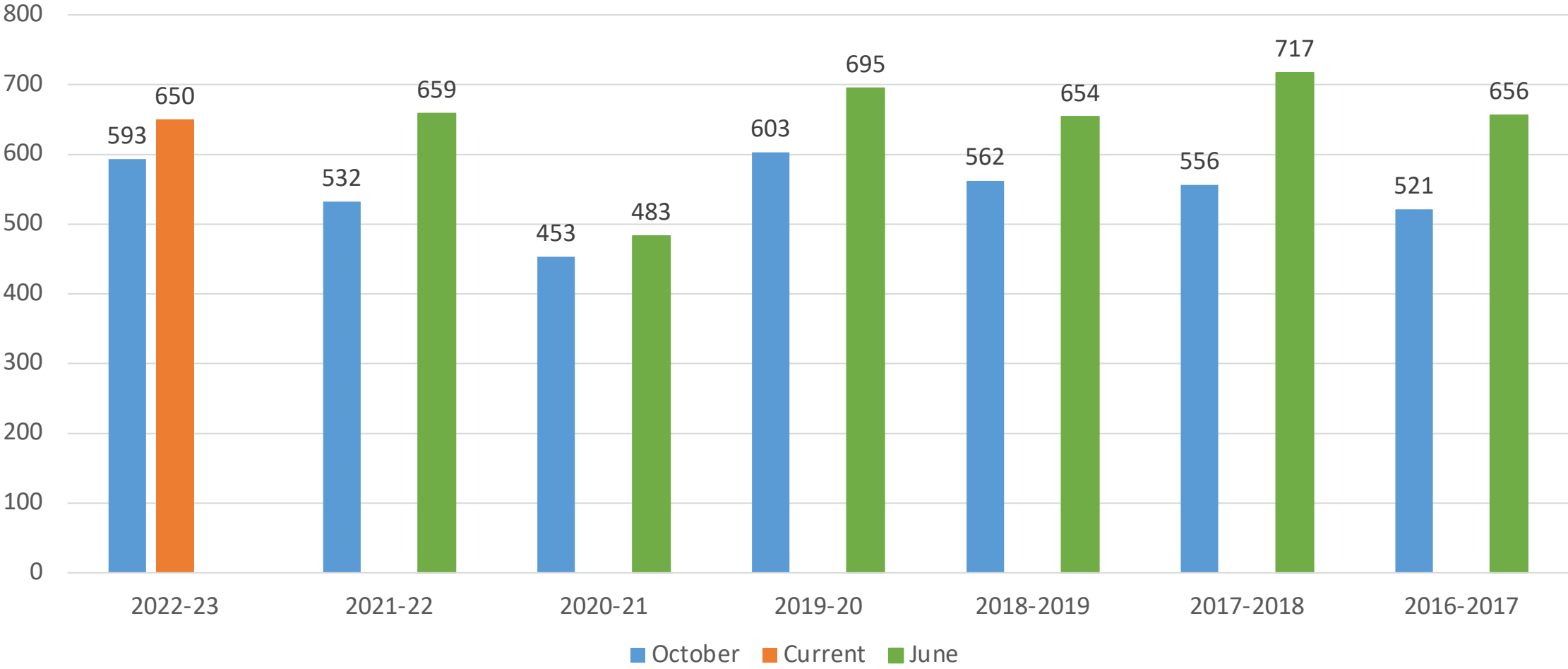
| Provider | Preschool Seats |
|---|-----------------|
| Lowell Public School System | *574 |
| Children's Village at the Mill - Community Teamwork | 36 |
| CTI James Houlares Early Learning Center - Community Teamwork | 300 |
| Lowell Collaborative Preschool Academy - Community Teamwork | 60 |
| Greater Lowell Family YMCA Nursery and After School Program | 63 |
| Learning Latta | 23 |
| Little Sprouts - Lowell | 80 |
| Lowell Day Nursery | 60 |
| Merrimack Valley Christian Day School, Inc. | 39 |
| Small Steps Daycare | 9 |
| UTEC Early Education Center | 10 |

*Enrollment as of October 2022 is inclusive of all three and four year olds.

-For community programs, this chart represents EEC licensed programs' capacity to serve children ages 2.9 to 5 years old.

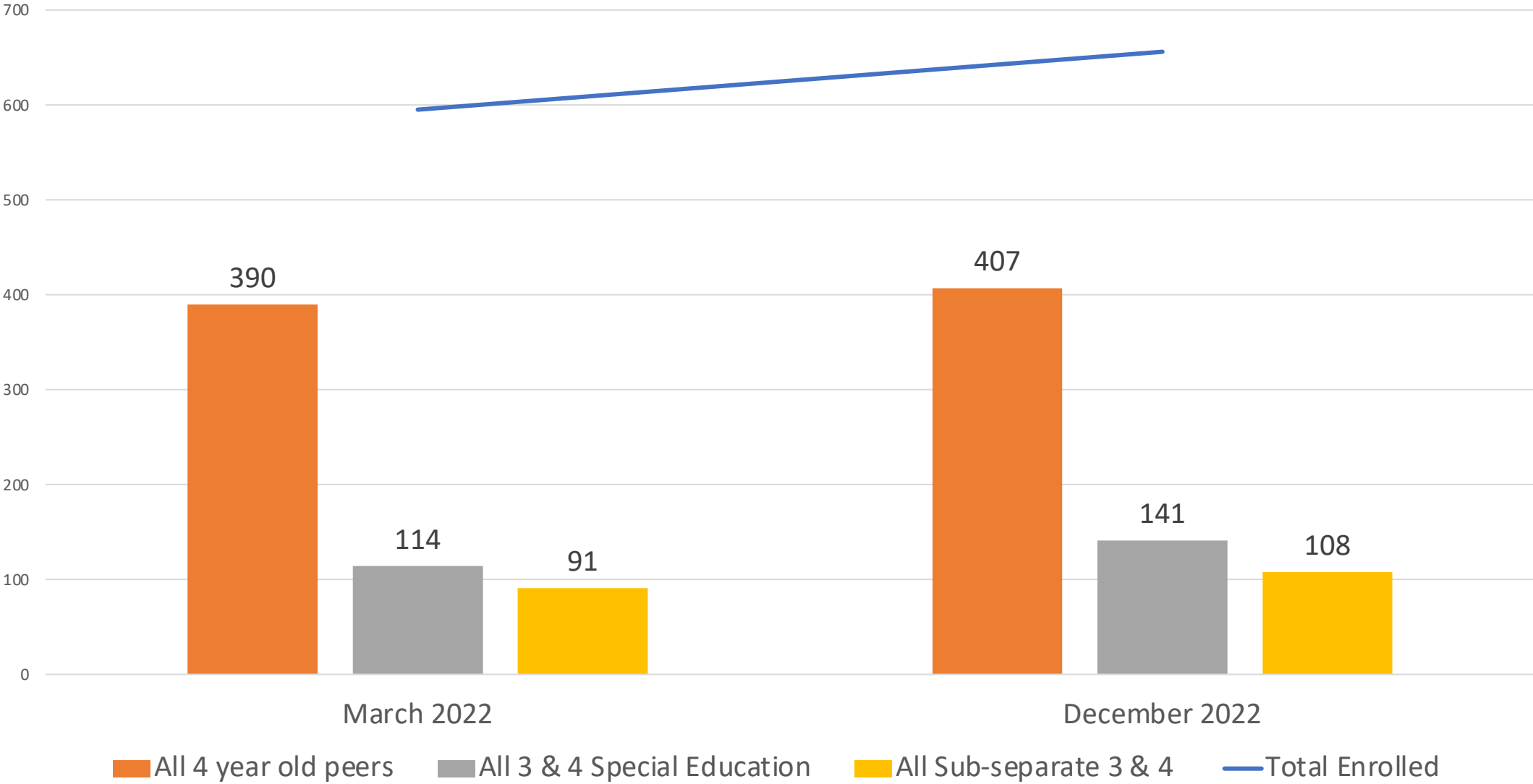
-This chart does not include family child care providers or children cared for by family members.

Preschool Enrollment Trend

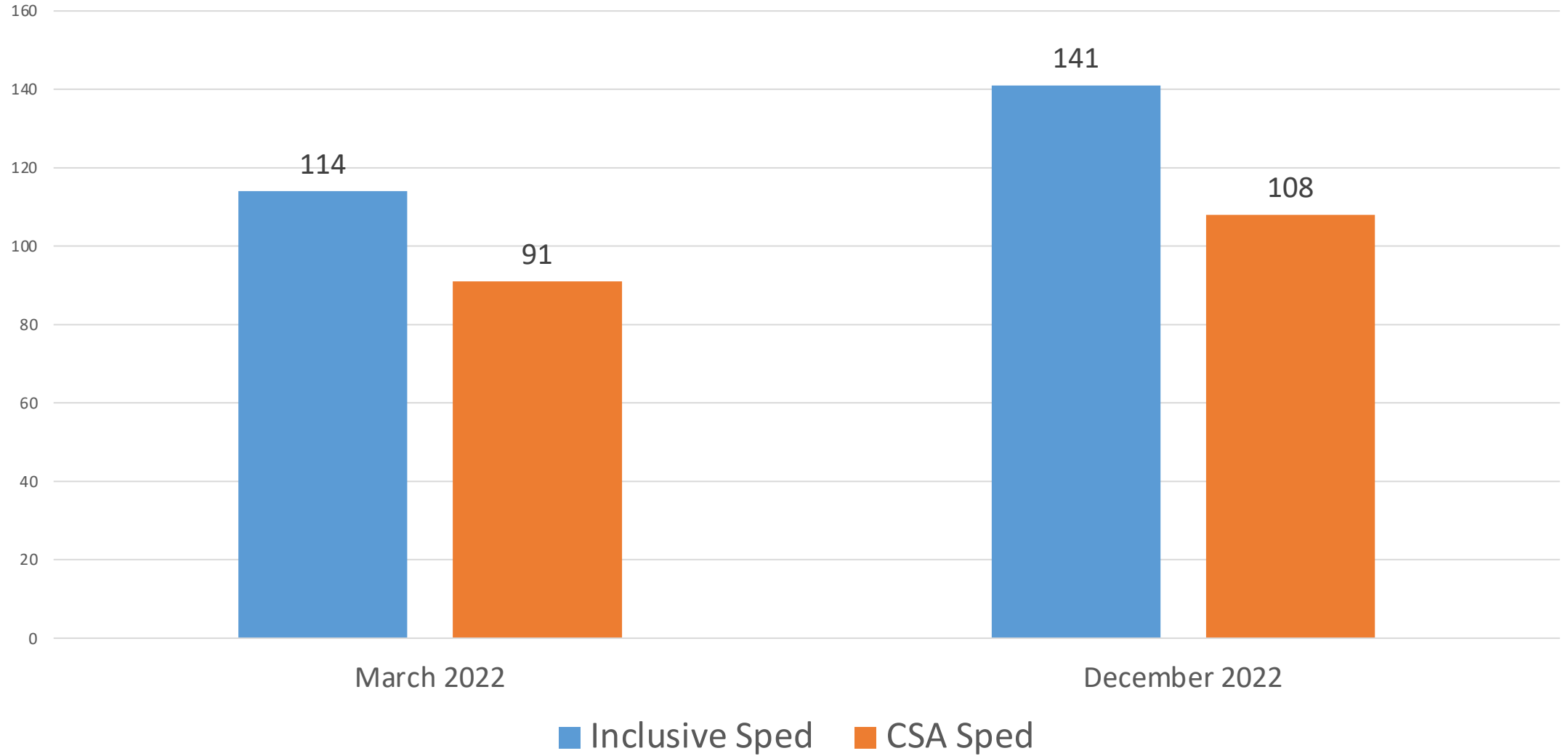


- This includes all three and four year olds enrolled in LPS

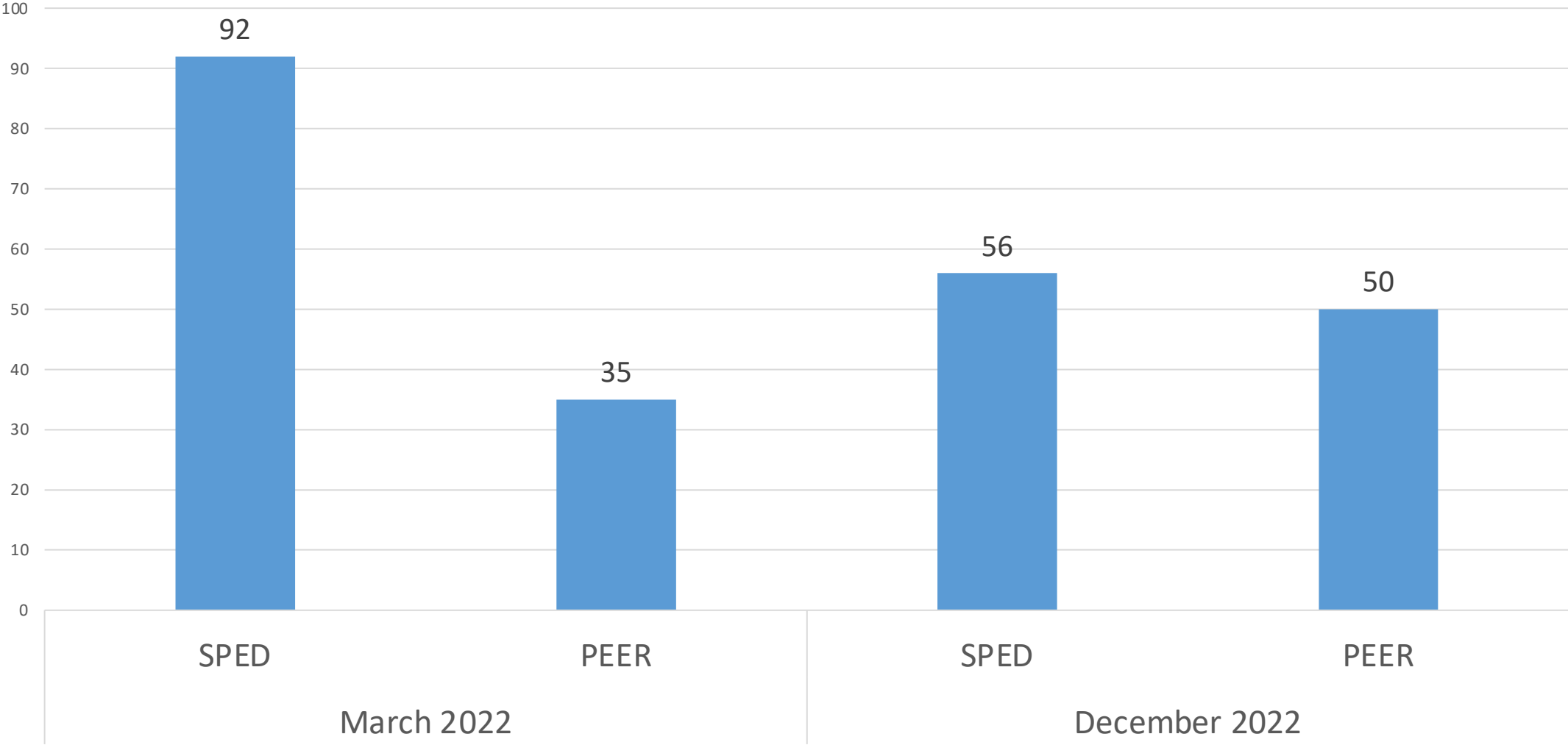
Preschool Enrollment LPS

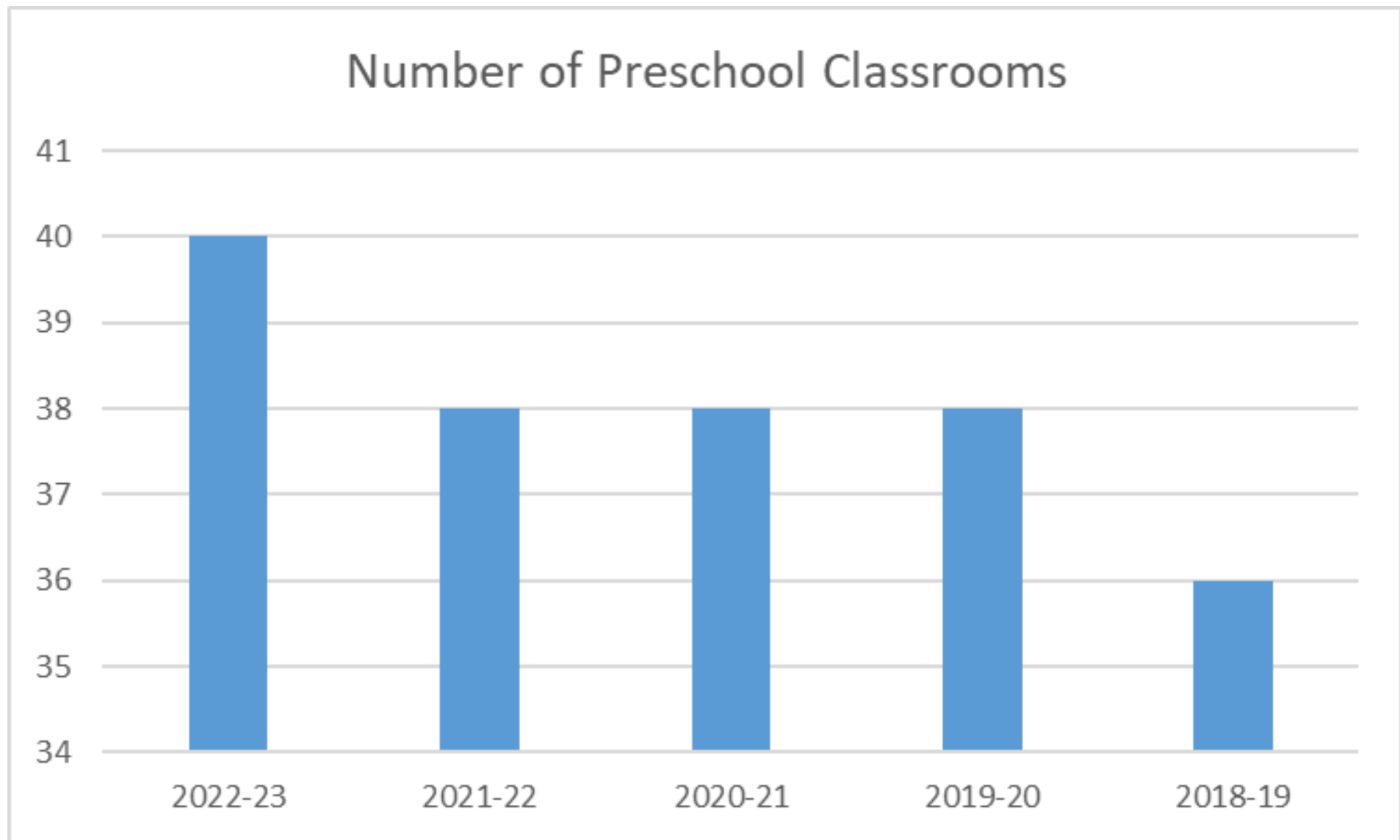


Special Education Enrollment

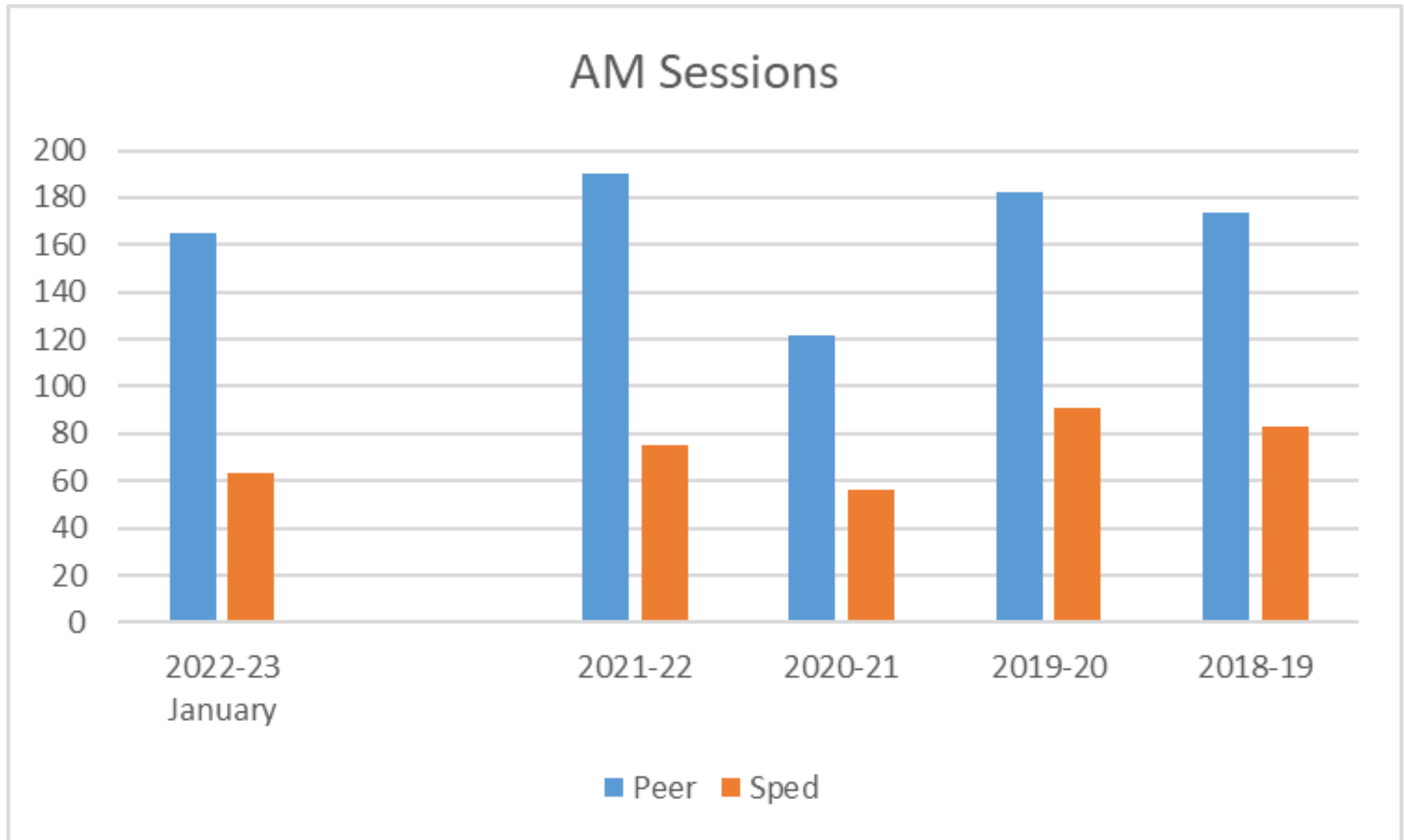


Openings in LPS Preschool Classrooms

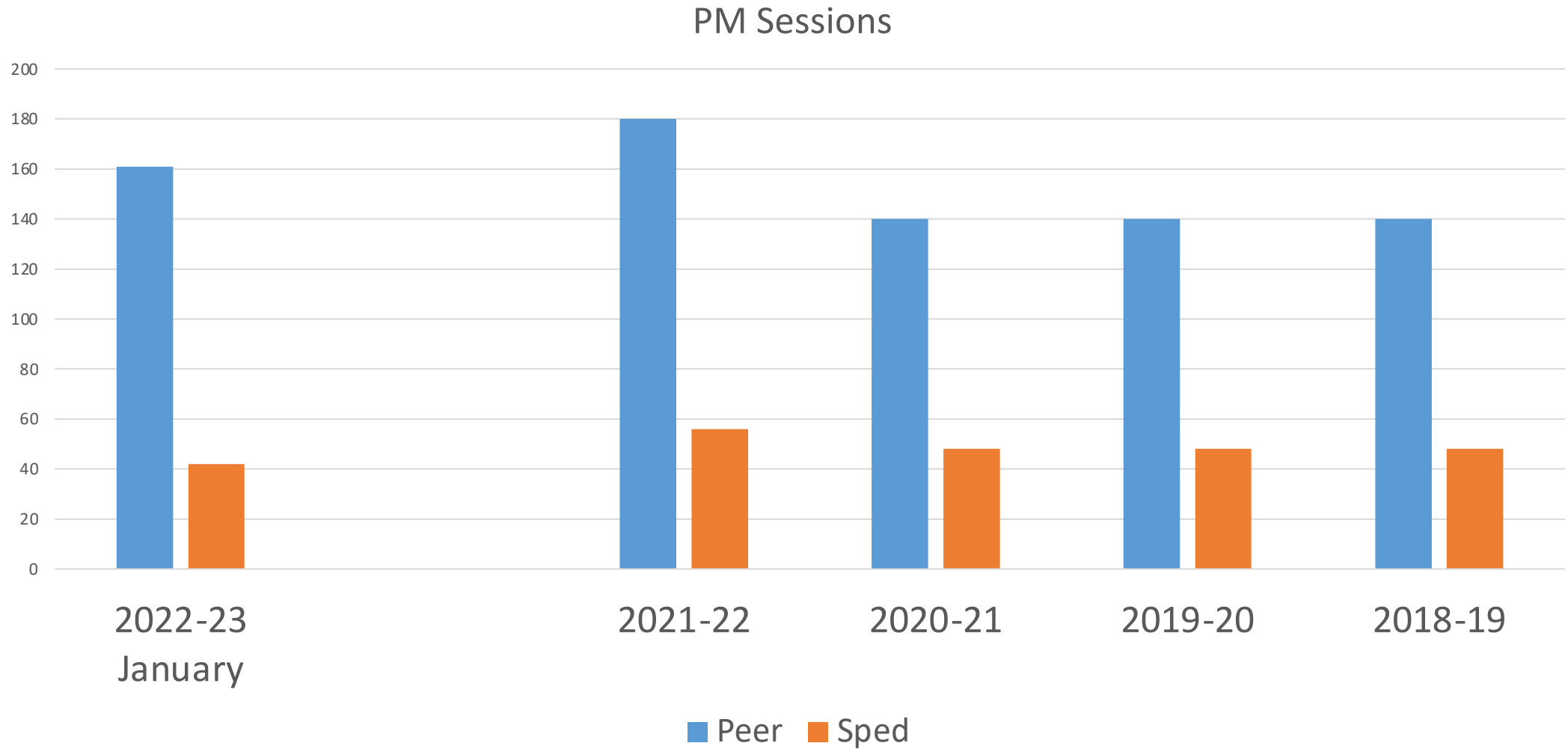




- Some classrooms serve an AM and PM session

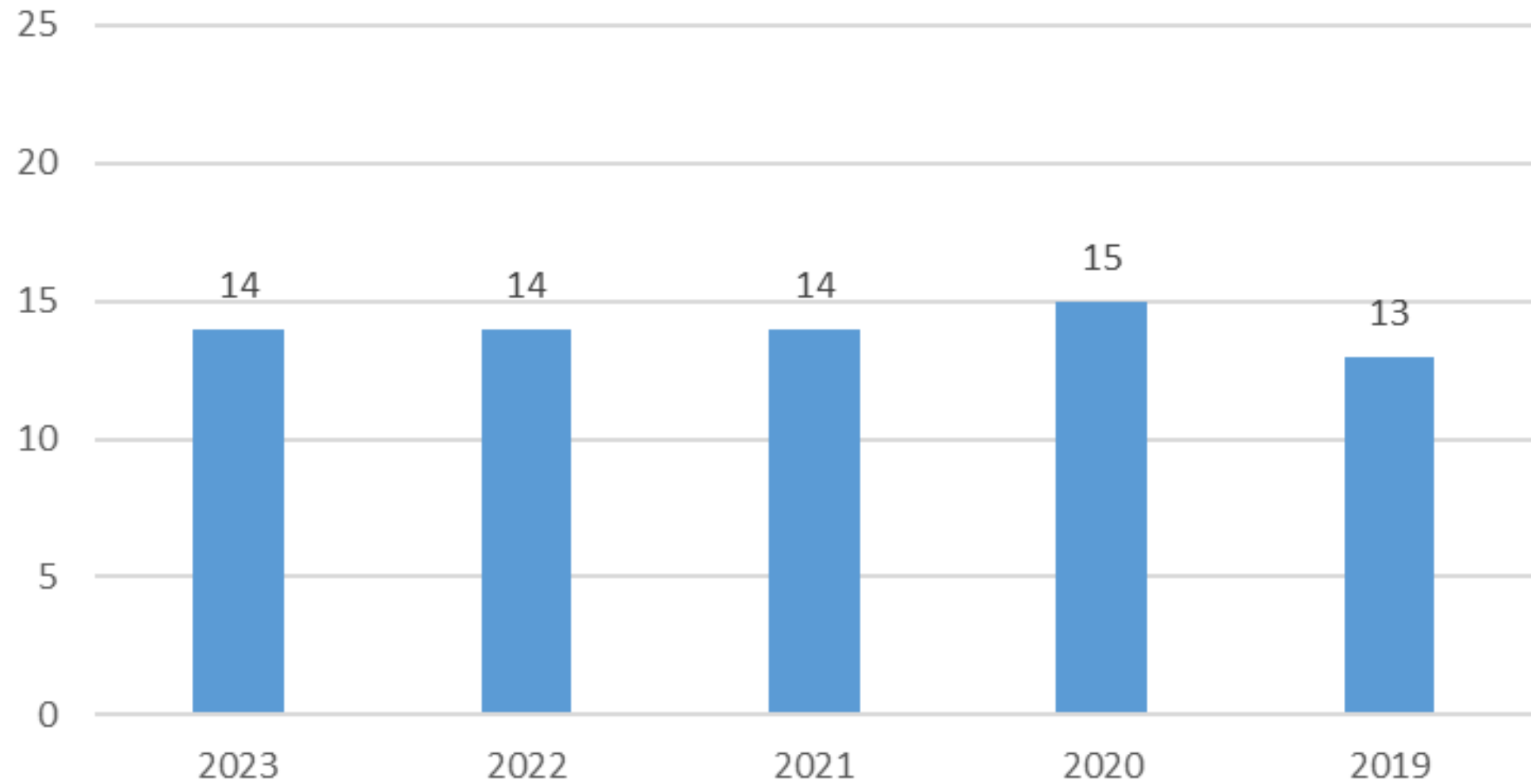


-Peers are currently enrolled four year-olds and special education students consist of three & four year olds as of September 1



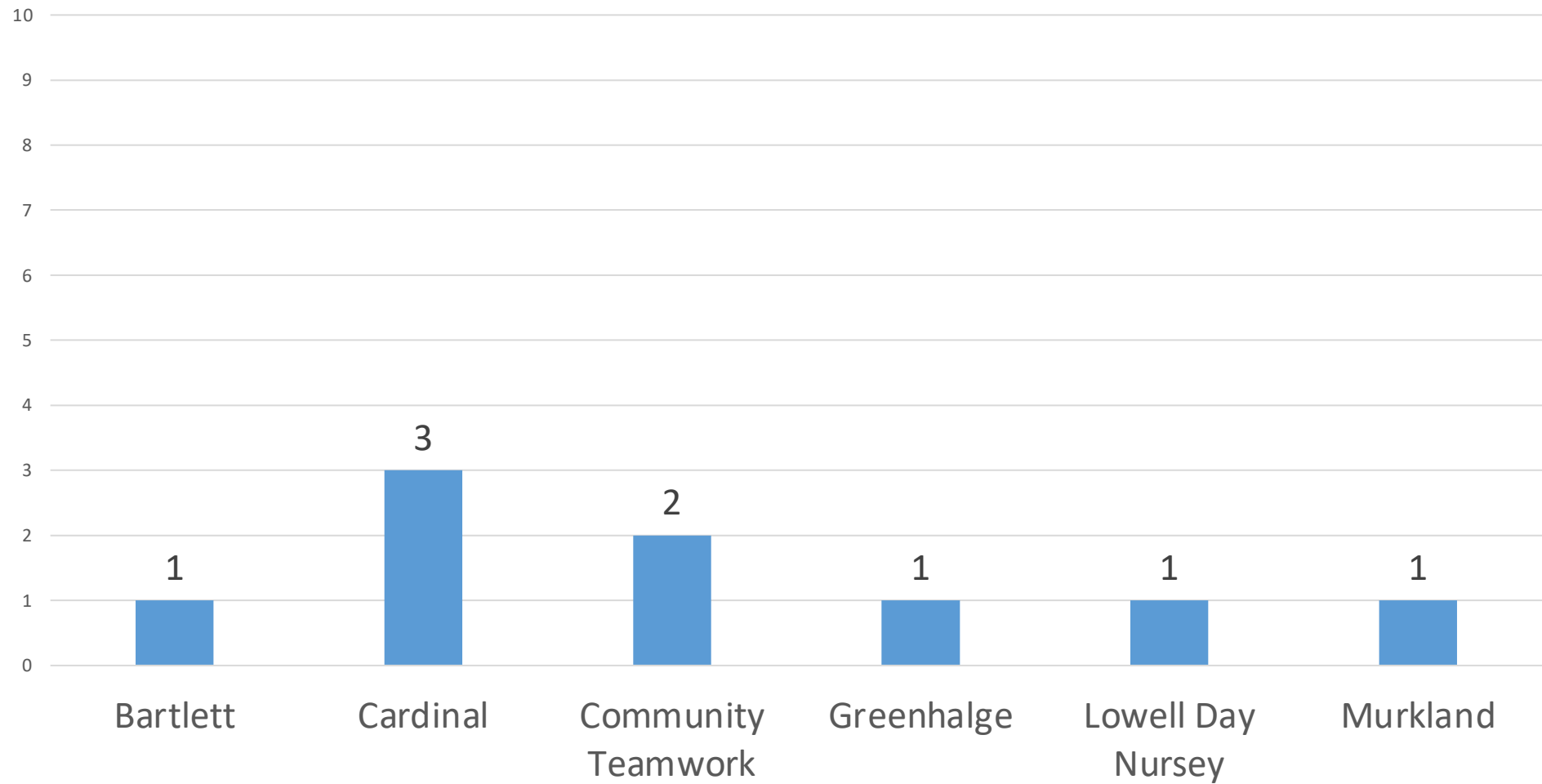
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Number of CSA Classrooms



CSA students are 3 & 4 year olds served in sub-separate classrooms

Number of Full-day Preschool Classrooms 2022-23



- CTI and Lowell Nursery classrooms are funded by LPS through an MOA

Expansion of Early Childhood for 2022-2023

Goal: 100 additional full-time seats in 2022-23

- Increase access to LPS preschool for all 4 year old children
 - From 27- 55 peers in **full-day** seats (23 new seats)
 - From 18 -21 special education **full-day** seats (continuing to expand as placement needs arise) (3 new seats)
- Contract with Early Learning Partners to expand full-day access to universal preschool in community programs
 - Community Teamwork Inc. CTI – 50 new seats
 - Lowell Day Nursery School – 10 new seats

52% of full-time seats in partner organizations currently filled

Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative = CPPI (2019-Present)

• **Three Priority Areas**

- Expanding access to affordable quality preschool
- Building locally aligned quality
- Equitable access to special education and inclusion



Consistency Across Programs

- Classroom teacher with minimum of Bachelor's degree and salary comparable to LPS full time early childhood teacher
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire 2 X year
- Phonological Awareness Language Screening (PALS) 3 X year
- Developmental Indicators for Assessment of Learning (DIAL Screening) prior to kindergarten
- Partners must be licensed or licensed exempt in good standing with EEC



Differences Across Programs

- Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) measure quality of classrooms (CPPI only)
- Coaching (GLEAM and CPPI)
- Access to comprehensive services (CPPI only)
 - Merrimack Valley Trauma (CPPI only)
 - Crossroads
 - Special educator
 - Speech and language pathologist
 - Outreach and registration



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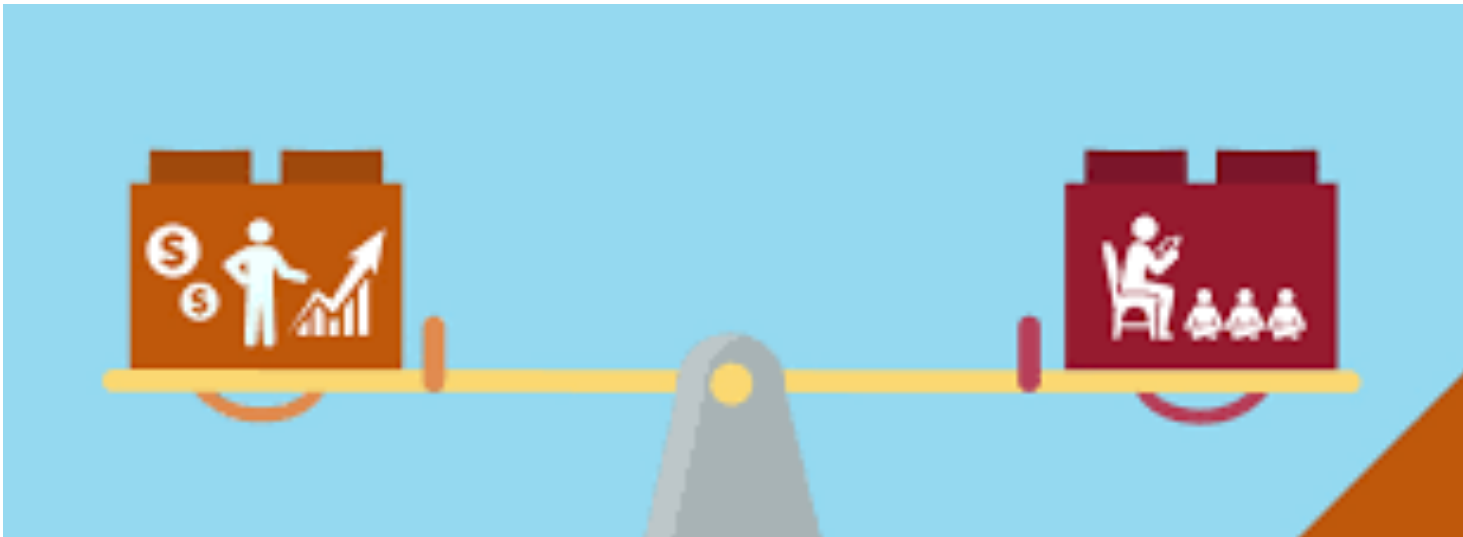
Shared Resources - Everyone is invited to participate in

- Professional Development Opportunities
- Lowell's Early Childhood Council
- Reach out to Early Childhood Department staff for resources
 - CFCE
 - EC Assistant (screening referrals)
 - Curriculum or other program needs



Barriers Identified by Partners

- Staffing
- Funding
- Transportation



Next Steps

- Work with community partners to overcome barriers in filling available full-time seats
- Engage Lowell's Early Childhood Council in the Early Childhood strategic planning process for universal Pre-K
- Strengthen community awareness of P-3 initiative taking place across the country
- Engage families in understanding child development home visiting, playgroups, and the Basics
- Conclude and analyze the PreK and kindergarten surveys currently open to families
- Include partner organizations as option on 2023-24 LPS Pre-K application
- Explore options to support families' extended-day needs through partnerships with providers in Lowell

